

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DUBLIN 00880 221616Z

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SUBJ: EDITORIAL IN IRISH TIMES, APRIL 22, 1977

FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN IRISH TIMES, APRIL
22, 1977 UNDER HEADING CARTER'S ENERGY:

THE PUBLIC (AS OPPOSED TO THE POLITICAL) REACTION -
INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES - TO PRESIDENT
CARTER'S BLOCKBUSTER OF A POLICY SPEECH ON THE CON-
SERVATION OF ENERGY, HAS BEEN SYMPATHETIC. THERE IS
ALWAYS THE FEELING THAT THE MAN WHO MAKES A BID FOR
INITIAL UNPOPULARITY HAS MUCH GOING FOR HIM (REMEMBER
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.) PRESIDENT CARTER'S NEW ENERGY POLICY
IS SAID TO HAVE PLACED HIS NECK ON THE BLOCK. IT WILL
BE DIFFICULT, TO SAY THE LEAST, FOR HIM TO CONVINCE THE
TWO HOUSES OF CONGRESS THAT THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED
STATES SHOULD CUT DOWN ON THEIR MOBILITY; AND MOBILITY
IS A PRIME FACTOR IN THE LIFE OF THE COUNTRY.

NORTHER AMERICANS LIKE TO KEEP ON THE MOVE. PERHAPS
THIS IS BECAUSE THEY FEEL THAT THERE IS ALWAYS ANOTHER
FRONTIER TO CONQUER, AND THAT THE COVERED WAGONS OF
YESTERDAY ARE THE SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT OF TODAY.
PRESIDENT CARTER, OF COURSE, MADE NO SUCH SIMPLISTIC
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PAGE 02 DUBLIN 00880 221616Z

COMPARISON. HE PLACED BEFORE HIS PEOPLE AN INTER-
PRETATION OF A POSSIBLE CRISIS. THEY WERE TOLD THAT,
IF THEY CONTINUED TO USE UP NATURAL ENERGY AT THE
PRESENT RATE, THEY WOULD BE IN DEEP TROUBLE BY THE END
OF THE CENTURY. HE IS TALKING, SPECIFICALLY, OF
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS.

MR CARTER IS MAINLY CONCERNED ABOUT HIS COUNTRY'S DEPENDENCE ON EXTERNAL SOURCES OF ENERGY. HE HAS NOT GONE SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT HE DISTRUSTS THE ARABS: INSTEAD, HE HAS RELIED ON HIS STATISTICS TO POINT OUT THAT EVEN THE MIDDLE EAST CANNOT COUNT ON AN INEXHAUSTIBLE CAPITAL POSSESSION. THE US PRESENT HAS GIVEN A WARNING TO THE WORLD AS WELL AS TO WHAT MIGHT FAIRLY BE DESCRIBED AS HIS GOVERNMENT'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE. HE IS TRYING TO GET ACROSS THE MESSAGE THAT AN ACCOUNTING HAS TO BE MADE, AND SCIENTIFIC REFORM DECIDED, IF THE WORLD AS A WHOLE IS TO AVOID A CRIPPLING SHORTAGE OF ENERGY BY THE END OF THE CENTURY.

APART FROM THE VISIONARY ASPECT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL PROPOSALS, CONSIDERATION HAS TO BE PAID TO THEIR DOMESTIC CONSEQUENCES. BY AND LARGE, AMERICA'S ALLIES HAVE APPROVED OF MR CARTER'S IDEAS. AS TIME GOES BY, HOWEVER, THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT THE PROGRAMME. THE PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR TRADE NEGOTIATIONS ADMITTED YESTERDAY THAT THE COMMERCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE POLICY WERE CONSIDERABLE. IF, AS MR CARTER SAYS, SMALLER CARS WHICH CONSUME LESS PETROL ARE DESIREABLE, WILL IMPORT CONTROLS BE RELAXED - TO THE BENEFIT OF EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE MANUFACTURERS? OR WILL IT COME ABOUT THAT THE AMERICAN CAR-MAKERS WILL RE-TOOL, AND DO THE JOB FOR THEMSELVES?

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT MR CARTER IS ABOUT TO ENTER INTO A HEAD-ON CONFLICT WITH THE MOTOR INDUSTRY, WHICH IS UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 DUBLIN 00880 221616Z

THE MOST POWERFUL ELEMENT IN THE AMERICAN ECONOMY, FROM THE MANAGEMENT AND TRADE-UNION SIDES ALIKE. THERE WILL BE FIERCE LOBBYING IN CONGRESS, WHICH WILL TEST THE PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY TO THE LIMIT. HE HAS RESERVES OF POWER - FOR EXAMPLE, THE RATIONING OF PETROL - WHICH MAY TRIP THE BALANCE IN HIS FAVOUR. VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE WITH NEW REGULATIONS, HE HAS WARNED, MAY NOT BE ENOUGH: THE PROBLEM IS TOO LARGE AND THE TIME IS TOO SHORT.

WHATEVER COMES OF THE PROPOSALS IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE, THEY SERVE THE USEFUL PURPOSE OF MAKING PEOPLE - ALL OVER THE WORLD - THINK ABOUT AN ABIDING AND URGENT PROBLEM, WHICH, IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER, MUST HAVE AN IMPACT ON EVERY COUNTRY, EAST, WEST, NORTH AND SOUTH. SOURCES OF ENERGY OTHER THAN PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS MUST BE SOUGHT: THE SUN AND THE SEA ARE THE MOST OBVIOUS CENTRES OF INTEREST. MR CARTER HAS ESTABLISHED A FOCUS OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN WHICH MUST NOT, AND

CAN NOT, BE DISREGARDED. KRENE

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